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1905

BROAD-

CAST

BY

ERNEST
CROSBY



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1905

BROAD=CAST

BROADCAST

By

ERNEST CROSBY

Author of "Plain Talk in Psalm and Parable"
"Tolstoy and His Message" etc. etc



FUNK and WAGNALLS COMPANY,
44-60, East 23rd Street,
New York,
1905

PS 3505

.K88-57
1705

Gift

Author

(P)

27 J1'05

Div. 7, 1902.
D.H. July 7, 1930.

To
EDWARD CARPENTER

*SEER beholding things divine,
Prophet of the olden line,—
Trumpeting a message clear
For the few with ears to hear,—
What though man be deaf to-day?
Truth is bound to make its way.
Soon the world will be content
To uprear your monument.
Pardon my impatient pen
That it cannot wait till then.
Fare you better,—fare you worse,
If upon this scroll of verse
One whom you have taught to think
Writes your name in fading ink?*

BROADCAST

*"SO is the kingdom of God.
As if one should cast seed in the ground,
And should sleep and arise, night and day,
And the seed should spring and grow up,
He knoweth not how, for the earth
Bringeth forth fruit of herself."*

*Thus would I sow to the winds
Broadcast the seed that may bear
Fruit in the harvest to be.
Others may rase and destroy,—
Tear down, demolish and waste ;—
Others may frame and construct,
Fitting together the stones,
As they think, of the city of God.
Mine be the lowlier task,—
Mine be the dropping of seed
In the long silent furrows of earth,
Where she bringeth forth fruit of herself.*

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Democracy

I

I SAW laws and customs and creeds and Bibles rising like emanations from men and women.

I saw the men and women bowing down and worshipping these cloudy shapes, and I saw the shapes turn upon them and rend them.

Nay, but men and women are the supreme facts !

II

How rarely have men revered the truly reverend, and respected the truly respectable !

How much of reverence has been, and still is, mere fetish-worship !

Reverence for Moloch and Juggernaut, who shall count its victims ?

Respect for tyrants and despots, for lying priests and blind teachers, how it has darkened the pages of history !

There is only one true respect, the respect for the conscious life that fulfils its true function.

Revere humanity wherever you find it, in the judge or in the farm hand, but do not revere any institution or office or writing.

As soon as anything outside of divine humanity is revered and respected, it becomes dangerous,—

And every step forward in the annals of man has been over the prostrate corpse of some ancient unmasked reverence.

III

And yet I am no abolitionist.

I would abolish nothing except by disuse.

Slavery is good for those who believe in slavery, for in a world of slaves there must be masters, and men with the hearts of slaves had better be slaves.

Government is good for those who believe in government, and punishment for those who believe in punishment, and war for those who believe in war.

Anything is good enough for the man who believes in it, and the first step upward is not abolition but disbelief.

IV

They write histories of the French Revolution as if it were over.

The French Revolution is not over; it never will be over.

That episode was a mere skirmish on the picket-line.

The duel between oppression and freedom is the very essence of life.

The French Revolution began ages before David gathered his Coxey army at the

DEMOCRACY

11

cave of Adullam,—ages before the great labour-leaders Moses and Aaron put themselves at the head of the Hebrew brick-makers' strike.

It will not end before the earth freezes into a Spitzbergen or is scorched into a Sahara.

V

The lists are open ; the combat is on.

The brute-man of the past and the God-man of the future must fight it out while heaven and earth look on expectant.

You can easily distinguish them by their weapons.

The brute-man fights with claws and teeth, with spear and sword, with bayonet and cannon and bomb.

The God-man has for his artillery naught but the naked truth and undissembled love.

Yet the brute-man blanches with the sure presentiment of his speedy overthrow, and winces as the God-man gazes upon him with infinite compassion.

VI

A murder on behalf of the people ?

That is no place for murders,—they belong on the other side.

Poor, brave, cowardly, cruel fool, who thought the people could be helped by murder, and, thinking to lay low oppression, well-nigh laid freedom low !

But there are other fools,—those who suppose
that a foul deed can for long set back the
hands of time.

Can a crime alter facts ?

Can any mad assassin kill the eternal truth ?

VII

Clear the field for the grand tournament of
the nations,—

The struggle to think the best thought and to
express it best in tone and colour and form
and word,—

The struggle to do the greatest deeds and lead
the noblest and most useful lives,—

The struggle to see clearest and know truest and
love strongest.

Your other blood and bludgeon contests but
postpone the real fray.

The true knights are yearning to enter the lists,
and you block the high festival with your
brawling.

Is it possible that you mistake this horse-play
for the real event of history ?

Away with all your brutal disorder, and clear
the field for the tournament of Man.

VIII

I do not wish to be above people ; I wish to be
with people.

The tiresome, hateful climb upward on their
heads and shoulders,—

(It hurts their heads and shoulders, but it hurts
my feet still more),—
The thin, empty air, thinner and emptier and
less satisfying the higher I get,—
The platform of envious faces on which I
stand,—
The continual scrambling and elbowing round
me and over me,—
The aimlessness and cruelty of it all,—
I am sick to death of it.
The soles of my feet yearn for the feel of God's
sod.
I do not wish to be above people.
I wish to be with people.

IX

The common people,—why *common* people ?
Does it not mean common life, common aspira-
tions, community of interests, communion
of man with man ?
Does it not imply the spirit of communism, of
fellowship, of brotherhood ?
Does it not suggest that human life down at the
bottom is more fluid and intermingled and
social than up at the top ?
Is not all this hidden away in the words " com-
mon people ? "

X

Would you make brothers of the poor by giv-
ing to them ?

Try it, and learn that in a world of injustice it
is the most unbrotherly of acts.

There is no gulf between men so wide as the
alms-gift.

There is no wall so impassable as money given
and taken.

There is nothing so unfraternal as the dollar,—it
is the very symbol of division and discord.

Make brothers of the poor if you will, but do it
by ceasing to steal from them ;

For charity separates and only justice unites.

XI

Peace between capital and labour, is that all
that you ask ?

Is peace then the only thing needful ?

There was peace enough in southern slavery.

There is a peace of life and another peace of
death.

It is well to rise above violence.

It is well to rise superior to anger.

(But if peace means final acquiescence in
wrong,—if your aim is less than justice
and peace, forever one —then your peace
is a crime. /

XII

I am homesick,—

Homesick for the home that I never have
seen,—

For the land where I shall look horizontally
into the eyes of my fellows,—
The land where men rise only to lift,—
The land where equality leaves men free to
differ as they will,—
The land where freedom is breathed in the air
and courses in the blood,—
Where there is nothing over a man between him
and the sky,—
Where the obligations of love are sought for as
prizes and where they vary with the moon.
✓ That land is my true country. I am here by
some sad cosmic mistake,—and I am
homesick.✓

XIII

A strange lot this, to be dropped down in a
world of barbarians,—
Men who see clearly enough the barbarity of all
ages except their own,—
Who shudder at the thought of wheel and fag-
got, of putrid heads displayed not so long
ago on Temple Bar,—of stinking corpses
hanging in chains along the highways while
vultures devoured them,—of mere boys
put to death for stealing a shilling,—and
who notwithstanding are snugly contented
with the survival of gibbets and the happy
invention of electrocution chairs,—
Who are outraged at the picture of black priests
hovering about the flames of an auto-da-fé,

but applaud their successors to-day as they encourage with their blessings the butchery of war,—

Who deplore the ancient miseries of the galleys, the torture of witnesses, the agonies of captives crucified or given to the lions, but see nothing wrong in our overcrowded prisons, our vice-breeding jails and our cold, relentless machine of justice,—

Who look down on the ages when there were no societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals, and yet are blind to the horrors of our abattoirs and laboratories, and take pleasure in killing and maiming helpless birds and harmless little brother beasts,—

Who condemn the brutality of the Spanish Inquisition, but sanction the writhing pains of the battle-field, the sabred face, the dynamite gun and the dum-dum bullet,—

Who abhor chattel slavery, but accept the dismal, hopeless enslavement of factory hands and the starvation of thousands out of work as heaven-born arrangements,—

Who sing pæans over the fall of political despotism, while they have scarcely a word of criticism for the industrial tyrants who tread us under foot,—

And who—strangest of all—are absolutely ignorant of the fact that future generations will consider them just as barbarous as their predecessors.

It is a curious destiny indeed to be planted in the midst of such a people.

XIV

And yet they boast of their high breeding and accuse us of despising it.

Despise high breeding ? Nay, but we should be fools indeed to throw overboard such a treasure.

Good manners, the nice sense of what is fitting, the refinement which is so difficult to learn in a single lifetime,—far be it from us to risk these hard-earned possessions of the race in any social cataclysm.

But is it not you, rather, who put them in peril—

You who would monopolize these gifts and restrict them to your narrow circle ; you, who hoard them like your gold and silver ;—who find the chief value of them in the fact that others have them not ?

“*Noblesse oblige*,” fine thought,—fair flower of feudalism, foretelling a summer of even fairer bloom. But “Manhood obliges,” is not that finer still ?

What are good manners but the traditional expression of a good heart ?

They are the small change of unselfishness, and if the heart is not pure metal, they ring false on the counter.

If you are selfish within—if you wish to keep these graces to yourselves,—by that very fact they become the cheap trimmings of hypocrisy.

As for us, we would make unselfishness common

to all, and the natural expression of it in outward life would follow.

We have nothing against aristocracy,—we wish to spread it abroad and its manners.

We herald the advent of the true aristocracy, the rule of the best over the worst in every human soul.

We would not for the world rob mankind of one gracious word or action ;

But our aim is to make of the treasures which you lock up in your palaces the common coin of the realm.

XV

The few, with their accumulation of money, shall not rule.

Have we rid ourselves of kings for nothing ?

Is an exorbitant railway fare or telegraph charge less tyrannous taxation than ship-money or a duty on tea ?

Charles the First and George the Third have risen from the dead, but industrial equality will come as political equality came.

Our fathers died for the shadow,—we demand the substance.

The few shall not rule.

XVI

It was all so simple in the old days, when people saw, or thought they saw, tyranny and oppression centred in one person, and in

attacking and destroying that person were sure they were saving mankind.

How easy it is to treat a boil just as a boil and to forget the corrupt blood that produced it, running into every nook and cranny of the body !

To-day, alas, the tyrant spreads like a vicious kind of nervous system throughout the entire frame of society.

I am part tyrant, part slave, as we all are in varying degree, and there seems to be no other alternative possible.

We are caught in the meshes of our own web.

We must disentangle the tyrant from us, and this new Gordian knot will not yield its secret to the sword.

We must thresh the chaff from the corn, and each grain has its separate outworn casing waiting to be winnowed away.

Alas, it is no simple rebellion on the old lines that calls for our adhesion and support ;

It is rather a complicated labour of unravelling and extricating and liberating from the network of poisonous creepers of the ages, whose roots are in our own hearts.

XVII

Democracy, what called you into being ?

What induced you to persist in struggling for centuries to tear off your chains, one after another ?

It was the longing for freedom, the desire to

grow and develop and thrive untrammelled and unrestrained, the determination to have no masters but your own wisdom and conscience and will.

Now that you have nearly reached the goal,—now that you have almost achieved the task,—how is it that you have forgotten your object and renounced the freedom for which you began the strife ?

Instead of knocking off the last shackles you are busy patching and riveting your broken chains.

You are having recourse to restriction and interference, tying the hands of those who would aid you, hampering the free play of the nation's life.

Will you be your own Napoleon, bringing your own revolution to naught to usher in again the old régime ?

Beware, beware of chains, though they be of your own making ; they were ever your curse, and how can they become a blessing ?

You have rid yourselves of your ancient tyrants, but their death was in vain if you try to adopt their manner of reigning.

Stretch forth your free arms, breathe the unlimited air, and think no more of using force against your members.

XVIII

✓ Liberty, sad, dethroned queen, though all the world turn against you, I will be true to you. ✓

Dragged in triumph at the wheel of Coercion's
chariot,—bowed down, dishevelled, foot-
sore,—though you be,—

Though the fickle populace, which but yester-
day hailed your accession with frantic joy,
now hoot and hiss you and deride,—

Yet I still perceive the majesty of your mien
and look and gait, and I acknowledge my-
self proudly to be your loyal subject.

Why have the people changed ?

Do they say that you did not give them the
prosperity that you promised ?

Ah, but when did they ever trust you with even
half the power ?

When did they ever fairly wrest your realm
from the sway of your victorious rival ?

His acts of tyranny have ever afflicted the land.
He always held tight in his fetters the soil, the
source of all, and trade, the distributor of
all.

Were they so foolish as to charge these wrongs
to you ?

Because Coercion bore heavily upon the people,
must they for this extend his rule so as to
make, as it were, a balance of his mis-
deeds ?

Shout for the usurper, you mad, incoherent
throng !

Little reck you that he will add to your yoke,
and, where there were whips, chastize you
with scorpions,

Many a weary year may pass along, ere you
bethink you again of your lawful queen.

XIX

Dear America !

Vast, vigorous, boastful, untidy mother !

I dwell upon your faults, not as an unfilial son,
but as an anxious father,—for you are my
daughter too.

You have made me what I am, and now it is
my turn to make you what I would have
you be.

Let others toil to prepare you fitting millinery ;
Let them seek to assure you health and strength
of body ;

My part will rather be to aid quietly in forming
your soul.

If we can but succeed in creating for you a
spirit commensurate with your greatness,
the rest will take care of itself.

The folds of your garments, the lines of your
face and figure, will surely take on the
beauty of your soul.

What nobler task is there on earth than shap-
ing the soul of a people ?

XX

To make men pull together,—

That was the aim which civilization set before
itself ;

Men pulled together at the word of command ;
The pyramids rose, Rome swallowed the earth,
—men worked long and wearily and

without a doubt that here was the finality of things.

Their dreamers and sages and saints could picture no golden age without slaves,
And the strong arm of the law made them toil.
But man grew, and looked, and asked why,
and slavery shrivelled and died.

And still the object was to make men pull together.

And the wage-system showed the way.

One man grasped all the good things he could and hugged them, and said to those who had none, "Work for me and I will give you a little."

Men pulled together again with hunger in their eyes ;

Factories sprang up, railways encircled the earth,—men laboured long and eagerly and without a doubt that here was the finality of things.

Their dreamers and sages and saints could picture no golden age without the wage-system.

And the strong arm of the law guarded the piles of good things and let the men go,

For now men strove to get work, and it was no one's interest to keep them through the winter, and the death of a man, such as once fetched his weight in coin, was no longer of consequence, for another would do as well.

But man grows and looks, and asks why, and the wage-system quivers with terror.

There is a new way to make men pull together.

Love, free co-operation, equal service, true honour and honesty,—have you never thought of these things?

Let us dream better than the old-dreamers,—and pull together.

XXI

✓ Men's laws,—laws of tsars or of majorities counted by the nose—

Call them laws if you will, but they are no laws. Enforce them; drag them after you like a corpse in a hearse.

No matter how long your procession, how grand your plumes and high-stepping horses,

You are advancing to the grave, and, go as slow as you please, before long you will get there. ✓

God's laws are other than these.

They live and breathe and enforce themselves. They lead the way onward with back turned to the cemetery.

If only one man feels the attraction and follows, he becomes by that alone the autocrat of the world.

When two or three join him, you have a divine aristocracy.

When the people are at last won over, there is democracy indeed.

God's laws are living germs and they quicken the blood in spite of votes and edicts.

XXII

Where are the leaders who will show us the way ?

Where are the discoverers who will search out the secret of true living and then apply it in their lives ?

We are ready to follow them.

When they discovered the uses of steam, we adopted their invention although we comprehended it not.

When they lassoed the lightning, and broke it in, and taught it to carry our words and voices and bodies, and steadily to illuminate the darkness, then we appropriated their inventions, though we did not understand them.

When men shall have discovered the proper functions of human energy and the way to apply it to free and social living, again we shall not be slow to adopt their invention, whether it passes our comprehension or not.

It is always enough that a few find the best path,—forthwith the world follows.

We do not want more education or books or legislation.

We have too much education, too many books, too many laws already.

We need only, here and there, a leader to discover and apply God's laws of social industry, and we will throng after them ; not one of us will be left behind.

XXIII

And who will lead the way ?
The good and wise must lead.
He that loves most is the best and wisest and
he it is that leads already.
Where the best lover sits is always the head of
the table.
Tell the great secret to the people.
Let the people love and they will lead.
No cunning device of ballot-machinery can
give them the power.
No system of common-schools, spending its
energies on mind alone, can give them the
power.
No campaign against monopoly and oppression,
however it may promise to succeed, can
give them the power.
Nay, but let the people love, and theirs is the
power !

From the Sanscrit

AS the young mother clasps her infant son,
So let us cherish, as our course we run,
A boundless friendly mind toward every one.

Stigmata Libertatis

✓
TELL me what the signs may be
Which forever mark the free.

First, they love all living things
Humbly,—yet as proud as kings.

Then of man they think no ill,
Let him do whate'er he will.

And this shows their freedom too,
That they grant the same to you.

Neither are they filled with woe
Over those who ripen slow,

For they know that, in the prime
Of the spirit's harvest-time,

Comes to every soul the hour
When it opens like a flower,

While the universe stands by,
Ever ready to supply

Lovingly its magic aid,—
Never hurried, never stayed.

Lastly, thus we know the free,
That they live right openly,

Standing naked as they are,
Unabashed by sun or star,

For they deem it grievous sin
To secrete the truth within.

Each of these is freedom's sign.
How I wish that it were mine !

God's Gift

"**W**HERE is my gift," said God, "that I
gave to men—

The sun-wed, fruitful earth, with her freight of
good

For all their wants ? What mean these prayers
for food ?

Are there poor in a world which bursts with its
golden stores ?

Who are the few that dare to withhold from all
My gift to all of the fruitful, sun-wed earth ? "

And the few replied : " O, Lord, we give Thee
thanks.

Thou gavest the earth to all, it is true, but lo !
Thy angels, Law and Order, who rule the world
When Thou art far away, have learned our
worth,

And rightly bestowed on us Thine inheri-
tance."

" I know them not," said God ; " they are
fiends from hell

That juggle thus with the gift that I gave to
man.

I am never far away from the world I gave.

And now once more and forevermore I give

This fruitful earth anew to the sons of men.

Woe to the fiends who shall dare usurp my
place !

Woe to the few who say that my gift is theirs !

Woe to the man who grasps his neighbour's
land ! "

LAND OF THE NOONDAY NIGHT 29

**The Land of the Noonday
Night**

A MINER'S SONG.

WE have eyes to see like yours
Way down in the deep, deep mine,
But there's nothing to mark but the dreadful
dark

Where the sun can never shine.
On the banks of clammy coal
Our lamps cast a flickering light
At the bottom drear of the moist black hole
In the land of the noonday night.

We have children at home like yours,
But at eve when we homeward tread
We find them asleep in a tangled heap,
Three or four in a single bed.
In the morning our tasks begin
Before the sun shines bright,
For we have no sun and we have no kin
In the land of the noonday night.

But our home is not like yours.
'Tis a bare, unpainted shack,
Where the raindrops pour on the shaky floor,
And the coal-dust stains it black.
Not a flower or blade of grass
Can escape the grimy blight,
For the face of our yard is seared and scarred
In the land of the noonday night.

But the men who own the mines,
And who live like kings of old—

30 LAND OF THE NOONDAY NIGHT

Ah ! little they care how their wage-slaves fare,
So long as they get their gold !
And the fire-damp may explode
And a thousand die outright,
For the men come cheap who go down deep
In the land of the noonday night.

And like feathers they weigh the coal
When they pay us by the head,
But for you who buy it twice too high
They weigh it like chunks of lead.
And our wage goes back in rent—
For they have us in such a plight—
And they squeeze us sore at the company's
store
In the land of the noonday night.

And we labour with straining arms
For the pittance they deign to give,
And our boys must quit the school for the pit
To drudge that we all may live.
And our teeth feel the grit of the mine
In the very bread we bite,
Till our inmost soul is defiled with coal
In the land of the noonday night.

And if in the end we dare
To assert our just demands,
Then their courts emit an injunction writ
To shackle our tongues and hands.
And if in spite of their frown
We protest that we will unite,
Then they lock us up or they shoot us down
In the land of the noonday night.

Who was it that made the coal ?
Our God as well as theirs !
If He gave it free to you and me,
Then keep us out who dares !
Let the people own their mines—
Bitumen and anthracite—
And the right prevail under hill and dale
In the land of the noonday night.

The Cotton Mill

O GRE dread !
Slavery raised from the dead !
I see you—not in the fields as of yore—
But stalking the factory floor,
Cracking your whip overhead,
While pale-faced children droop in the rum-
bling roar,
With tiny fingers twining the hateful thread,
And dreaming of bed.

Half gone is the night.
To left and right
An acre or more of dim-lit whirr extends.
For six dull hours' interminable length
These babies have strained their strength ;—
Another six must wear away
Before, at break of day,
Their torment ends.

What is that piercing cry ?
Only another thumb and finger crushed ;
Another little hand awry.
The cry is hushed.

The girl has fainted, but the surgeon comes ;
How skilfully he cuts and binds and sews.
Fingers to sever, and thumbs,
How well he knows !
Carelessness maims and kills,
And children will be careless in the mills.
Now he leads her out, never to climb
Those stairs again to earn her nightly dime.

Yes, in this dismal hall
Broods the angel of death.
Many his shapes.
He lurks in their very breath—
In the cloud of cotton-dust that hangs like a
 pall,
Over all.
Strange that a child escapes,
For dropsy, the wasting sickness, the fatal
 cough,
Crouch, ready to carry them off.
In a dozen years from to-day
Half of these infant slaves
Will sleep in forgotten graves,
More happy there than those who stay,
Still bound to the wheel of the mill,
And racked and tortured still.

Will a monument ever rise to attest
How they fell at the Ogre's behest ?
Yes, far away in the North
Will a Herod's palace set forth
Why they laboured and died ;
For its splendours will hardly hide

Its foundation laid on their tombs,
And the walls of its sumptuous rooms
Cemented with children's blood, where lingers
The trace of bruised and wearied flesh and
mutilated fingers.

Murder will out ;
And the palace will tell
How its corner-stone stands firm in hell
With a shout !
And, who knows ? our Herod may build
With the gold of the killed
A church to his devilish god—his Moloch, who,
from his throne
Gave him the world, as he thinks, for his own.
And asylum, and hospital, too,
May spring from the bleaching bones
Of these innocent ones,
Crying to heaven the truth
Of their massacred youth,
And the story of Herod anew
In an epitaph true.

These be thy triumphs, O Trade !
Triumphs of peace, do they say ?—nay, of war.
At the cannon's foul mouth afar,
Sore afraid,
Brown men, and yellow and black,
Buy what they never would lack
When the Ogre says " Buy ! "
And with white lands as well it is war that we
wage.

Let them die ! [age
Their trade must be shattered to naught in this

Of the dollar supreme.
We must conquer. Our dream
Is a beggared world at our feet.
So we draw up the armies of trade
And invade,
With the children in front, to fall first, as
 is meet—
Children of mill and of sweat shop and mine—
And behind them the women stand,
Jaded and wan, in line ;
Then come the hosts of the diggers and builders,
 artisans, craftsmen and all.
It is fine !
It is grand !
Let them fall !
We are safe in the rear, with the loot in our
 hand.

And you, makers of laws !
Who are true to the gold-bag's cause—
Who will not interfere—
To whom commerce alone is dear,
And who pay any price—
Child's life, or woman's, or man's—
For its plans—
Makers of devil's laws, breakers of God's,
Open your eyes !
See what it means to succeed !
Confess once for all that you worship the Ogre
 of Greed.
And then
Turn again !
For know, there are scorpions' rods

Of remorse, and dishonour, and shame,
In the wake of his name.
Ogre dread !
Send him and his slavery back to the dead !

The Stoker

NOW and then a stoker, come up to breathe
between decks, glances under the canvas
awning at us as we yawn over our novels
in the long row of steamer-chairs aligned
on the leeward side of the upper deck.

I wonder what he thinks when he sees us.

Kind, good stoker, why do you not come and
sit in my chair and make me stoke in your
stead for a while ?

How good God is to give us first cabin passages
through life !

And how nice of people to make ships for us
and provide us with a good *table d'hôte* and
comfortable beds and everything ready
just when it is wanted.

And how fortunate for us it is that the world's
hold is full of stokers who ask no questions
and have no sense of humour !

The Escutcheon

POUNCE on the innocent, Powers-that-be !
Live up to your coats-of-arms—

Vulture or beast of prey—

Whatever is cruel and harms,

And loves to torture and slay—

Your symbol and brand.

Though the soft lie drop from your lips, on your
shields we see

The lust of your heart's desire as it guides your
hand.

But the brutes are brave and will fight

With the best of their breed ;

While ye, ye nations, have goodly heed

To cringe to the men of might

And harry the weak.

All your courage of old—

All the strength that ye used to wreak—

Ye have lost in your search of the ends of the
earth for gold.

But now that ye are combined

In imperial sway,

Let your holy alliance find

An escutcheon new that will fit this ultimate
day.

Makers of money and empire, why not assume

The good old Medici arms of the Golden Balls ?

Dig them reverently up from the tomb,

And hang their eloquent sign from your outer
walls.

Leave their sins to the beasts—let us answer for
ours.

All hail to the arms of the Pawnbroking Powers.

Coronal

L O, the peoples,—all of them—

Form our Planet's diadem,—

Men and women, hand in hand,

Circling, linking land to land.

TO ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI 37

Like a garland round her head,
See them, yellow, white and red,—
Sombre-hued and fair and dun,—
As she dances round the sun.

Pale or dusky though they be,
Yet she flaunts them equally,—
Proud of all of them,—afraid
Lest a single blossom fade.

Flowers, twine in friendship true !
Buds be plenty, briars few !
So the wreath that now adorns
Ne'er becomes her crown of thorns.

Beatus Ille

HAPPY the man, who, probing what is
meant
By the vague gnawing of his discontent,
Traces it back to discontent with self,
And then stops cursing his environment.

To St. Francis of Assisi

DEAR Francis, did Assisi's burghers frown
And did the women look askance and
chide

Because thou tookest for thy chosen bride
Lorn Poverty, thrice-shunned of all the town ?
The hard-earned wealth the ages handed down
Was it thy pleasure thus to thrust aside ?

What wonder then that all the world deride
To see thee wedded in a beggar's gown ?

38 THE SCHOOL OF RICHES

Little they recked that from thine emptied life
Giotto and Cimabue would draw the power
To bring forth Art, nor that thy hymns when
rife

Would sow the seed of Dante's splendid flower.
Nay, Poverty, I wot that never wife
Brought to her own true lord such priceless
dower !

The School of Riches

I

BLESSED are the poor who know the
emptiness of riches.

The poor are no better than the rich.

✓ It is the poor in spirit—those who do not desire
riches (those who have passed beyond
riches, not those who are yet below them)
—who are better than the rich. ✓

We are all in the same school of the Vanity of
Riches, and the rich are in the senior class,
the class of experience, and will perhaps be
the first to be graduated.

Some day we shall all take the degree of Con-
tempt for Riches.

Blessed are the poor who know without experi-
ence the vanity of riches, for they shall
take the degree *cum maximâ laude*.

II

Methought I heard God and Satan talking of me
as once they talked of Job.

And Satan said : " I am tired of all these ancient forms of torture. The writhings of the prisoner under the lash weary me. The shrieks of the captive in Central Africa as he feels the slow inevitable fire make me yawn. All these old fashioned sufferings have become maddening in their monotony. When I was young, how I revelled in these joys, but now, alas, those days have passed away. What new punishment can I invent for this man ? "

And God said : " What hath he done to deserve punishment ? "

And Satan answered and said : " He prayed continually for riches and pleasures and consideration, and strove for them above all things, and forgot Thee altogether."

And God said, " Give him wealth and its honours and pleasures, and see to it that he find no way to escape from them, and then open his eyes that he behold what manner of things they be."

And Satan went forth from the presence of God exulting as of yore.

Look Sharp

LOOK sharp ! thou art one of God's eyes.
Speak clear, for His word thou art.
Be His finger,—act strong and wise.
Love hard, and get into His heart.

“Not a Christian”

SO you condemn him once for all as “not a Christian.”

What is your test of a Christian ?

I call Christians those whom Christ would be likely to associate with if He came back to earth to-day.

Do you think He would frequent bishops' palaces ?

Are you sure that they would find Him quite orthodox,—in short, your kind of a Christian ?

Where do you think He would preach, at St. Paul's or in Hyde Park ?

Would he explain the doctrine of the Trinity, and the efficacy of infant baptism, and the use of proper vestments at the Mass ?

How the poor priests would huddle these things out of the way, if they really saw and recognized Him !

But they would not recognize Him.

He would talk of Scribes and Pharisees, and Chief Priests and Rulers in the good old way.

And how long would you “Christians” listen to Him without indignation ?

Buddha

PASSIONLESS, contemplative, free from desire,

Beyond love and hate, beyond good and evil,
forever beyond the pairs of opposites,—

Is this, O Gautama—once so human, so lovable—is this the true goal that you have reached ?

Is there no divine passion, no pure supreme desire ?

May I not choose to dwell in the equilibrium of the opposites rather than rise above them ?

If life and desire are one, must I crave death, thus still desiring ?

Or do we really mean the same thing, and is your immeasurable calm a more abundant life ?

If you could only have been in Galilee in those other days !

How you would have loved each other !

And what would you have had to learn, and what to teach ?

Religion

THE childish mistaking of pictures for facts,—

The crass materialization of allegory,—

The infinite capacity of man for humbugging himself,—

And underneath it all the shadowy outline of truth.

Cain

NAY, flee not from me. Does this livid brand

Stamped on my brow affright you ? Fear it not,

It marks a sin, perhaps, but yet a sin

That had its root in kindliness of heart,
Which brought upon my soul, bent Edenward,
The hatred of my brother Abel's God.
For with my mother's milk I had sucked in
Eden's sweet memories, and she told me much
Of that glad time when all the beasts and birds
Were, as it were, her brethren—how it was,
The Master of the garden blessed them all,
And gave them every herb and every tree
To be to them for food, and how one day
She plucked the fairest fruit of all, and how
The Master drove them forth, Adam and Eve,
In anger, and how first He slew the beasts
That looked with trustful pitiful amaze
At this new monster, Death, and how he bound
Their bloody skins around her waist and his,
While both shrank back in horror. From the
day

I first could understand that oft-told tale,
I dreamt of Eden, and I sought to turn
Even with my baby hands this cursed earth
Into another garden. And I loved
To till the soil, and bring my choicest fruits
And lay them in my mother's lap, and ask
If these were fair as Eden's golden yield.
And she would smile,—oh, such a plaintive
smile,—

And tell me “Ay,” and kiss me, but the tears
That fell upon my face and her deep sigh
Said “Nay” more clearly. Abel listened too
To all these tales, but little did he care
For Eden and its green luxuriant herbs.
Rather he loved to hear how the dumb beasts

Came to the slaughter,—how the skins were
ripped
From the warm bodies, how the sharpened
stone
Pierced the soft flesh, and how the blood gushed
forth.

And once upon a time, as with my foot
I guided through the thick and blackened soil
The irrigating waters, in the sky
I saw a smoke ascending, and I smelt
A burning stench, and heard the bleat of lambs.
Then ran I toward the place and through the
trees

Looked curiously. What was it that I saw ?
My brother Abel holding in his hands
A new-born lamb that cried just like a child
While he bent back its head and cut its throat !
And well-nigh all its blood poured out and left
The trembling body. On a pile of stones
Crackled a mighty fire, while bones and wool
And bits of flesh and trickling streams of blood,
With here and there great splashes, made a
scene

That touched mine eyes with madness, and I
felt,—

As I beheld those helpless slaughtered lambs,—
The self-same spirit of blind blood-thirstiness
That filled their murderer, strike into my soul.
I stooped and lifted from the ground a stone
Large as my head and hurled it at the lad
Before he saw me. It felled him to the earth
Crushing his back. I saw his red life's blood

Mix with the lamb's upon his legs and arms,
And then I fled. . . .

If I had only guessed
That violence will not yield to violence,—
That butchery keeps alive the butcher's trade,
Shedding of blood the murderer's! Had I known
That by my very deed I gave assent
To Abel's sin, and made it permanent,
Forever taking from myself the right
Of re-creating Eden! Had I dreamed,
(As since that day I often have foreseen
In visions), how the centuries would drag on
From cruelty to cruelty, with that sin
Transmuted into custom,—slaughter-houses
Revered as temples, lines of butcher-priests
Pointing mankind to Moloch, conjuring up
A God who loves to hear his victim's cries,—
To sniff the smell of blood, and in the end
To torture his own son, whose followers—
The wolf-like followers of a lamb—should joy
In burning saints and prophets at the stake,
And later yet in preaching war and strife,
Bloodshed and tyranny against those who work
For peace and justice! When I think of this,
And how one moment of a wider love,
Embracing killed and killer, in my heart
Might once have blotted out this tale of guilt
And changed the current of the stubborn years,
My punishment is more than I can bear.

But do not shun me. Do not turn away.
Be sorry, for this hateful brand proclaims
A sin that was at worst but half a sin.

To Nero

I

NERO, old dog, I see myself looking out of
your big eyes.

We are volcanoes from the same subterranean
fires,—

Geysers from the same boiling, invisible sea,—

Rays from the same eternal sun.

You recognize me, don't you, brother ? I read
it in your trustful gaze.

II

How many cycles is it since we were all let
loose like homing pigeons to find our way
back to God ?

We each took our own course and all of us,
except man, have run into some *cul-de-sac*
or other.

Poor hop-toad and earth-worm, what ever
allured you into such ugly unpromising
paths ?

But I can understand the oak tree and golden
rod, yellow butterfly, the black-winged
scarlet tanager and the cheerily singing
wren.

I almost wonder that I too have not come to a
standstill in one of these pretty by-ways,
doomed to mark time forever in exquisite
aimlessness.

What an iron will it must have been that kept
me to the true road so long !

III

Centrifugal, centripetal,—

A going out, a coming in,—

A separating, each for himself, a gathering
together again, each for all,—

That is the history of life in the universe.

First the selfish plant, then the animal making
delicious experiments in mother-love, and
at last in us, men, scattering life at last
promising to respond for good and all to
the converging forces,—

Yet all of us alive with the one great life, com-
prehending, as it does, growth and com-
pletion, out-breath and in-breath, farewell
and hail.

The sap rises in yon tall sugar-maple at the
outer hem of the life universal,—the un-
conscious life of the world's digestive
organs, neither knowing nor thinking, its
nerves rooted low down in the cosmic
spinal column.

Your life, old Nero is higher, the reflex-motor
instinctive life that centres in the lower
brain of the world, knowing but knowing
not that it knows, doing but ignorant of
how it does,—just as we walk unconsci-
ously and stumble when we put our minds
to it, and use words unconsciously, which
seem strange when we repeat them.

And our man-life is loftier still, our nerves
communicating with the great upper brain,
ramifications of the Eternal Will, and of
that Will we are the offshoots.

IV

How the good old mastiff longs to answer me !

See it in his eyes and hear it in his whine !

Alas, poor Nero, it is too late now.

In the old plastic days your Adam gave over
his mouth to gluttony and strife, and relegated
all signs of sympathy to his tail, and hence
his brain stood still.

He preferred indulgence by himself to sociability,
and everlasting loneliness, perpetual
solitary confinement in self, was his reward.

V

O desire, creator,

Creator reft in twain,—self-desire and yearning
for others,—

The self-god triumphing in the beast of prey,—

The social God in man who is his brother's
keeper !

For the social yearning it was that created man.

Man longed to commune with his fellows, and
shaped his mouth to speech and his brain
to thought.

It was because he cared more for communion
than for food or fight, and honoured his
tongue above his teeth, that he became man.

VI

And the social God is still at work creating.

His spark is kindled in the breast of man, and
we do not yet know what we shall be.

We are still on the main highway ; we have
successfully threaded the labyrinth thus
far ; we have a future before us.

Shall we escape the blind alleys ?

Shall we have nerve to stick to the narrow path,
turning neither to the right hand nor to the
left ?

Shall we succumb to the attraction neither of
gay feathers nor soft music, nor to the long-
ing to fly in the heavens above nor to
burrow in the earth beneath, nor to swim
in the water under the earth ?

Shall we advance with confident unswerving
instinct, knowing that the Overman, when
he comes, will be born of the social yearn-
ing ?

VII

And yet, Nero, I will not boast that I am human
and a man in your presence, for all life
must rise together.

Such epithets are too narrow for me ; they are
mere party-terms and faction-labels.

I will have none of them.

I will be nothing narrower than a neighbour
and a brother.

You are a neighbour and brother, and how do
I know that you are not human and a
man ?

I am persuaded that you have a future too.

We are all arrows shot at a mark at a venture.

Do you ask what blunderer with misty eye and
palsied arm sent you thus aimlessly through
space ?

Patience ! It was no blunderer, and we shall all
arrive.

April

SEE the apple-orchard
Bathing head and shoulders
In the dazzling pea-green
Rising-tide of April ;
While an ancient pear tree
In the kitchen garden
Spreads the rugged outline
Of its jet-black branches
Underneath a drifted
Mass of snowy blossoms.
Tinted is the herbage
With unnumbered violets.
Tiny sky-blue butterflies
Like uprooted flowrets
Flirt among the sunbeams.
Hickory-tips are bursting
Into clustering parachutes.
On the white-oak saplings
Pink and folded leaflets
Now uncurl their tendrils
Like the opening fingers
Of soft new-born babies.
Listen, from the marshes
Multitudinous frog notes
Ringing out metallic
Like the ghosts of sleigh-bells ;
While a red-winged blackbird,
Eager to be mating,
From a bare twig bugles,
“ O-kal-ee,—it’s April ! ”

Spring Thoughts

I

THE leaves are not out yet upon the mountain, but the red promise of them begins to tinge its grey flank.

And so my heart flushes with the springtide, and the robins and blue-birds come back to me also from the South.

For I am part and parcel of it all.

There is no feeling in bird or beast or insect, in bud or tendril, which has not its counterpart in me.

I am as bold as the bear emerging lean and famished from his winter dormitory.

I tremble at the sound of the crackling branch with the squirrel and rabbit, as they prick up their ears and listen with ear and eye and tail.

The snake and the toad hop and glide within me, though I would fain deny them.

I am more natural than the nature around me, for the wolf and the panther have left these woods, but they still have their lair in my heart, and no advance of civilisation will ever drive them forth from that fastness.

I sleep and dream with the stolid forest trees, lulled by the south-west wind.

I feel the sap rising in me, and I wake into ardent blossoms.

I struggle for air and sunlight with them all, though we look so innocent and peaceful.

Every note in the scale of creation from heaven

to hell rouses to vibration some sympathetic chord within me.

I cannot escape a single experience of the universe, if I would.

My cowardice is as futile as all cowardice is futile.

I live with all the life I see.

The spring and summer are mine, and the fall and winter will just as surely be mine, and after them the following spring-time.

I must have all—all.

My lot must be completely bound up with the common lot.

I claim no exclusive privilege.

I will live with them and I will die with them and with them shall I rise from the dead.

Nature has not slighted me by exempting me from any of her laws.

II

The willows are signalling with light green streamers the arrival of Spring in the offing.

The soft maples have hoisted the red standard which in their code has the same meaning.

Sail in with swelling sails, O ship of life, for the ice has long since ebbed out of the harbour.

Coming and going every year, O ship, bringing the living and taking away the dead, tell me, where is the other port at the end of your annual journey?

Do you bring them to life too, and take away their dead?

On the deep, lonely sea is your cargo somehow
changed and transformed ?

I half guess the secret of your voyage.

Tell me, is it not true that death is only the
seamy side of birth ?

III

The pale-green finger-tips of the sombre firs
point in all directions at the wonders of
April.

In the woods the warm days have lured forth
the tender leaves on the young trees, and
undergrowth, but the lofty oaks show
hardly a sign of life as yet.

A greenish mist of leaves is rising sun-lit from
the ground, but it reaches only half way
up their towering trunks.

New yellow sprouts stand upright on the
diminutive pines like candles on a Christ-
mas-tree.

Each sprout, each needle, each leaf, grows forth
independently, obeying only the life within.

O woods,—

Untamed, unheeding woods,—

Ungoverned, unlicensed, unpermitted,—

Asking no one's leave to fulfil your destiny !

In vain I peer and search beneath your branches
for a glimpse of the State.

Here at least the State is for once well out of
sight.

Before your leafy wands the giant Bogey of the
ages has vanished with all his spectral train
of rights divine.

The only divine rights here are those of beech and chestnut,—but that I am here too with the rights divine of Man.

I pledge my allegiance with the forest trees.

Their oath is my oath and their State is my State.

We are the true realists and deal only with facts.

We are not like the sentimentalists in town with their big books, pretending that they are practical while they are lost in a maze of Laws and Policies and Patriotisms and Precedents and countless other shadowy sentiments duly capitalized.

We know what they have forgotten, that the one ultimate fact is life.

When the leaves of the oak are ruled by a majority rather than by the inner life of the tree, then, and not till then, will I believe in majorities.

IV

Robin, robin, here you are once more.

Why did you desert us so early last Autumn ?

There were still plenty enough of seeds and insects.

Why did you not stay with us longer ?

The robin answers not, but he cocks his head as if to say :

“ What makes you too fly away from the old and tried to the new and unexplored ? ”

V

I have looked down upon the earth from afar.
I have noted its slow and regular respiration,
the summer rising and falling like the
bosom of a sleeping child, rolling its green
flood alternately north and south and ebb-
ing back again before the advancing snows.

I have watched the flight of birds up and down
the throbbing lands as it keeps time with
the swelling, sinking breath.

Whence comes the tireless, imperative push,
push, push, behind it all ?

I cannot tell you but I feel it in my heart.

I am like the bud ; I am conscious of a touch
of mysterious life at the very centre of me
that sets all the rest a-bursting.

Push, push, push,—the old hardened envelopes
of custom and habit on the outside which
have so long restrained me yield at last
and fall withering to the ground.

The old kernel swells outward and in turn falls
off likewise.

And yet forever streams into the centre a
steady flow of life, welling up from the
infinite source that fills the bird and flower.

Push, push, push.

As the word of the Lord came to Abram, as it
came to Israel and Moses, as it comes year
after year to the robin, so also it comes to
me, saying,

“Get thee out of thy country and from thy
kindred and from thy father’s house, unto
a land that I will show thee.”

VI

May is almost over and the long rows of locusts on the winding avenue are pale with blossoms, which are now beginning to fall like snow on the carriage-way.

The air is heavy with their perfume and the full clusters buzz with innumerable insects.

It is prayer-meeting night and the church-bells are ringing their beautiful call once again from the village.

I think of the sleepy, uncomfortable congregation, only quarter filling the chapel,—of the general funereal pitch of the service,—of the atmosphere of dismal duty.

The hum of the bees is as fresh as it was in Eden ;—why then has the message of the bells lost its freshness ?

The locust-blooms are as new-inspired to-day as they were on the third day of Creation.

Why is it that the beautiful bells mean less every year ?

VII

I see a dead beetle in the road and the ants are devouring it with great haste.

I wonder what enemy cut short its life.

With all my fellow-feeling for this Spring-world, surely there is something exotic in my soul, and it did not all grow up from this hard-hearted soil.

Its tap-root sucks up its compassion from some warmer, softer loam, and something

foreign to this inter-struggling world has taught it to be less pitiless.

Poor beetle, whose voice is it that the busy voracious ants obey ?

Wonderful little inlet into which the ocean of life once surged, now left high and dry but still bearing the shape into which the great water fashioned you !

How the persistent waves of the sea of life continually assault the shores of matter, working their way into it at every nook and cranny, and then running inevitably out, leaving the beach strewn with empty shells like this poor beetle-case !

But the sea is still full of water and not a drop that was here but is there, rising and falling with the living tide.

VIII

Coffined too long in my body, I spring forth at last unaccountably free.

I make my choice to live outside, even on the advancing outskirts of my subtle influence.

All these years I have been content to go to the bottom like a stone and lie at rest in the soft mud.

Now I choose to spread out forever on the surface like the widening undulating circles.

I did not know that I could walk on the water, —but I can.

I tried it at first fearsomely as if it were thin black ice which would give way with my weight,—but it bears.

Oh, the freedom of it, rising thus as it were
 from the dead,—
 Forsaking loneliness, ambition and pride,—
 Swelling out into fresh air, buoyancy, health
 and love,—
 Finding no frontier anywhere,—
 Sensible of infinite, wasteful regions of elbow-
 room,—
 Breathing in space and leaving it behind,—
 The universe passing through me as the ocean
 passes through the gills of a fish.

IX

I leave my metropolis on all the railways at
 once with a free pass which no one need
 be ashamed of in my pocket.
 My soul leaps forth north, south, east, west by
 every quivering wire.
 Before long I shall hold the whole world in a
 net.
 My nerves are the central office of a great tele-
 phone company.
 In every town and hamlet there will be a
 branch office and an operator to see and
 hear from me, responsive to my every
 message.
 It will be "hello, hello" to all the world with
 the stars and planets thrown in, but there
 will be no "good-bye."
 I shall speak to them all at once and they will
 speak to me all at once, but there will be
 no confusion.

X

Now I am free with the ultimate freedom of all things.

For the first time I am at large and find myself in my true element.

I was meant to fly ; I was half conscious of it even when I lay in the befouled nest.

I know now how the fledgeling feels, when the mother-bird hides all day in the sugar-maple and peeps out to see if he will dare to follow.

He is very hungry, he chirps piteously, he does not know what has become of his hundred meals a day and of the familiar warmth which was as a part of himself.

He listens in vain for the well-known cluck which means " Here's a worm for you."

When at length he is well-nigh desperate, something strange moves within him for it is his Spring-time.

He hops out of the nest, he knows not why ; he flutters his wings, he has faith, he flies, he is born again.

Oh, life, life, that other existence in the old nest was not life.

I am delirious with new-found joy.

O mother-bird, over there in the thick of the maple-tree, are you not as happy as I am ?

XI

The creative movement is ecstasy.

You cannot have creation without ecstasy.

Rose-bud red and robin-egg blue and rosy
blue-eyed baby all tell the same story of
ecstasy.

All life is conceived in ecstasy.

Fatherhood and motherhood are ecstasy.

God, the Father-Mother-Creator, is ecstasy.

And the return to God is ecstasy.

Worship

BOW before God in prone humility,
Till thou remember that He lives in
thee ;

Then lift thy head superb among the free.

In the Garden

I SPIED beside the garden bed
A tiny lass of ours, .
Who stopped and bent her sunny head
Above the red June flowers.

Pushing the leaves and thorns apart
She singled out a rose,
And in its inmost crimson heart,
Enraptured, plunged her nose.

“ O dear, dear rose, come, tell me true,—
Come, tell me true,” said she,
“ If I smell just as sweet to you
As you smell sweet to me ! ”

Wine of Eternity

GOD took a vial from its place,
His throne a span beyond,
And spilled into a chalice-glass
Its drops of diamond,
Which sparkled in the light of His face
Like brilliants of Golcond.

These be the waters of To-day,
Limpid and live and clear.
He put the empty vial away,
And chose another near,
Whose liquor was a yellow-grey,
Amber and dead and sere.

Drawn from the Past's dull stagnant lake,
This draught He poured likewise.
To watch the crystal wax opaque
Brought brine into mine eyes,
Like Asiel, when he spied the snake
Glide into Paradise.

Now still another addeth He—
A vial with darkness kissed,
Like fluid-night—the Time-to-be—
Of jet and amethyst—
And now He stirreth all the three
Into a purple mist.

Then in a tall translucent urn
Seraphs decant the bowl,
Like wine upon the lees, to turn

The vintage of the soul,
And as they pour, the liquids churn
And seethe and heave and roll.

They set it on a step below—
This urn of mystery—
And on it write as angels do,
“Wine of Eternity,”
So that the tiniest cherubs know
What dangerous drink it be.

Ah, will it turn to amber pale,
A heartsick monochrome ?
Or will the amethyst entail
A violaceous doom ?
Nay, crystal Now, prevail, prevail,
And clarify the gloom !

Yesterday

TO-DAY and To-morrow will change, but
Yesterday changes never.
To-day and To-morrow die, but Yesterday lives
forever.

And little they love each other, this trinity of
the ages,
And frightful is the war which each with the
other wages.

To-day pursues To-morrow through every kind
of weather,
With Yesterday at his heels, who swallows them
both together.

To-day is ever thin, and To-morrow grows thinner and thinner.

But Yesterday waxes fat with his one eternal dinner.

Though time seems long indeed and the universe stout and staunch,

Will Yesterday gulf it all in his huge omnivorous paunch ?

Moods

I

THERE is nothing but moods.

Love underlies creation and love is a mood.

Thought shares the burden with love, and thought springs from axiom and premiss, and axiom and premiss are moods.

Even mathematics rests on the number One, and One, the idea of unity, is a mood, which has nothing in nature to answer to it, for all things are complex and compound.

It is moods then that bear the universe on their back.

There is nothing but moods.

II

I am tired of thinking.

All things are true and so are their opposites.

I believe every philosophy, but not that it contains all.

I adopt all religions, while I remain the universal heretic.

I agree with all men, but I see the other side which they do not see.

I sympathise with every fad and also with the blind hater of fads.

But what a weary vacuity this breadth of mine is !

I could find it in me to envy the chipmunk in yon narrow crack in the locust tree, with just room enough to turn a somersault and pop his head out before his tail is fairly in, and with no object in life but nuts and birds' eggs.

O chipmunk, what is the wisdom of the worlds compared with yours ?

What need have you of the human philosopher hugging his favourite horn of the eternal dilemma ?

Surely you are the prince of philosophers, cracking your history nut to a purpose while I split my head in vain.

III

The world-riddle is heavy upon me to-night.

O Sphinx, why do you stop me on the road and let the others pass by ?

Why do you mock my impotent brain and tear my fevered heart asunder ?

How often I have spent the whole evening over some idle mechanical puzzle,—

Cursing my stupidity for not being able to solve
it,—

Cursing my infatuation for not being able to
give it up,—

Stretched and racked upon the horrible little
instrument of torture.

This is life.

The sphinx himself can furnish no formula by
way of solution.

Perhaps if I grow into him and he into me, I
may feel at last the answer of peace at the
roots of my being.

But meanwhile would that I could throw away
the toy, put out the lamp, and go to bed !

IV

A plump little phebe-bird is perched on the
lowest branch of the pear tree, with her
head cocked on one side, watching the
waving sea of grass for her prey.

Ever and anon she darts down and comes back
in an instant to the same twig with a moth,
caught on the wing, in her bill.

A great dragon-fly sails slowly by, and the tiny
bird makes a dash for it, but, thinking
better of it, she hovers in the air a few
inches from the insect, following its flight.

Then she turns disconcerted and flies back to
her post, while the dragon-fly sails proudly
on.

I was not as wise as the phebe-bird.

When I saw the universe buzzing by, I pounced upon it and we are still grappling with each other.

V

I lie in bed in the morning, just awake enough to be thankful that it is Sunday and that breakfast is to be an hour later than usual, but still I have a feeling that it must be time to get up.

I take my watch from the chair by the bedside and look at it.

But no. I have not really moved. I was dreaming and I saw the dial through closed eyelids.

Can I ever make up my mind to get out of bed ?
No ; surely never.

But all of a sudden I find myself throwing back the covers and sitting up, and now the hard-wood floor near the rug feels smooth and cold to my feet as I seek my slippers.

What was it that at last drove me out of bed ?

Who fixed the moment of my rising and made me doubt whether I am man or automaton ?

VI

I caught an unexpected sidelong glimpse of my right foot and ankle as I got out of my tub this morning, and it startled me as if I had met a faun or centaur in the woods.

How does it happen,—strange, inexplicable

B.

E

animals that we are,—that we ever grow
accustomed to the sight of each other ?
We are creatures as extraordinary as the
grotesque shapes in the sea or under the
flat stones in the pasture.
How natural and inevitable in comparison is an
oak or a chestnut-tree.
If the blind man of Bethsaida had only seen
correctly !
If men were only more like trees walking !
The trees are so clean.
They never spit nor sweat.
They exude nothing less savoury than aromatic
odours, and they make the air sweet to
leeward.
Cut them open anywhere and they have no
ghastly secrets to reveal.
Their death is full of dignity and there is no-
thing revolting in their decay.
While men befoul the world, it is they that are
forever cleansing it.
I think that in heaven men will be more like
the forest trees.
And if our animal part is weird, that part of us
which is not animal is still weirder.
We are afraid of ghosts, and we are ghosts our-
selves.
There can be nothing more uncanny than the
crowd on Broadway.
It is as fantastic and gruesome as the wind-swept
clouds of shades in Hades.
It is enough to make your hair stand on end
and your voice stick in your throat.

If we were once to open our eyes, we should be frightened out of our wits at the sight of our fellow-goblins.

I am surprised at my courage in being willing to remain in a room with you on a dark night.

VII

I met a man yesterday whom I had not seen or thought of for thirty years, and the appalling fact struck me that during all these weary months he had never for a moment been able to escape from himself.

What a frightful thing it is, when you come to think of it, to be imprisoned for life in yourself, and even in sleep to dog your own footsteps like a shadow.

How is it that we pray for an eternity of this same monotony, and do not long, when we rest from our labours, to rest also from ourselves ?

VIII

There is no past and there is no future, for who ever entered into either of those illusory realms ?

There is only a now.

✓ Be not anxious for the morrow for there is no morrow.

Live in and for to-day, for all life is to-day, and if your to-day is right, all is well for ever. ✓

IX

Floating, slowly floating through the air,—
Gliding, now swiftly, over vast surfaces but
never touching them,—
Walking the waves and finding them soft and
pleasant to the feet, but preferring to
skim over them as the swallow skims,—
I could swear that this is my natural way of
locomotion.
How often I dream of it and come back to my
legs as to unfamiliar, awkward crutches!
What is our swimming and diving, our coasting
and skating, our riding and cycling and
motoring and dancing, but a vain effort
to realize this dream?

X

I am not really here.
I am really up there somewhere.
I look at myself with surprise to see myself
talking so glibly.
It is after dinner and we are sipping coffee in
the drawing-room.
The company are gossiping idly and I am
speaking to my neighbour.
I talk like the rest of them, but we are unlike,
for I at least feel that I am not all here.
I am up there somewhere, and my body with
its brain is my tool, which I gaze upon
and criticise.
There is that within me, my friends, that you
dream not of.

There is more in life than coffee and cigarettes
and liqueurs, if you will only stop chattering
long enough to let it speak for itself.

XI

✓ We are all marionettes, and I tire sometimes
of the play.
The comedy of it does not amuse me, and its
tragedy is too tragic.
I cannot follow the plot for its intricacy. ✓
The seats are uncomfortable to painfulness,
and there is no room for my cramped
knees and elbows.
The air is close and stifling and the garish light
sears my eyes.
I long for the last scene when we shall drop
the masques of time and space and find
behind them—just you and me !

XII

Yet there is fascination too in the world as it is.
How I love the slap-dash, slam-bang of the
devil's gypsy music !
Oh, to skim along without a soul, to dance
madly, to let yourself go,—
To slash yourself with knives, to set your teeth
and grasp the blades exultingly until
they cut to the finger-bones,—
To be completely inebriated with the rhythm
of passing things !
But here come those wretched familiar scruples
again !

What pleasure do you take in making my life miserable ?

Just as I let myself out at a full run and confidently brace myself for the leap, I am sure to catch a glimpse of your sour disapproving faces ; my energy and resolution melt within me, my knees turn to water and I halt in confusion.

I am forever rebelling against you, and then following you slavishly wherever you lead.

And yet I do not half believe in your paradise. You promise me a quiet conscience and you do not for a moment give it to me.

I begin to doubt if it lies in your direction.

I could envy the thick-skinned unscrupulous men who ride rough-shod whither they will, and no more think of lying awake o' nights than earthquakes or thunderstorms.

I *will not* be a cowardly, blameless man. There you have my declaration of independence.

And yet,— and yet,—

What is that beyond that I hear ?

The calm compelling chords of a new celestial harmony.

The stars of music shining down compassionate upon the blazing crackling, crashing, conflagration of sound.

The immortal sisters, heaven and hell, recognising each other, and only differing as the one is more mature and fairer and wiser.

XIII

I hear my conscience speak.*

Alas, that I should hear it, for, just as to hear
my heart beat, it argues disorder and
disease.

Why did I arrive before the end of the morbid
centuries ?

Who condemned me to be a degenerate, con-
scientious man ?

Who made me unfit to be free from myself,—
at once a slave and a tyrant ?

It will all pass away.

Like the hermit-cell, the hair shirt, the flagel-
lation, it will pass.

When brotherhood comes, when full com-
munion comes, it will already have passed.

XIV

Posterity, dear children, we are facing all this
perplexity and torment of spirit for you,—
Unravelling the loose ends of the mystery for
you,—

Discovering God, finding something better
than creed and decalogue for you.

The growing-pains of the world have fallen
to us, but our joy will be in your full
growth and vigour.

The prisoner in his cell thinks most of free-
dom ;—

* These lines were suggested by an article in the
American Journal of Sociology for May, 1898, by
Professor E. A. Ross.

The starving man dreams ever of choicest meats ;—
And so my soul, walking alone and lonely,
ceaselessly conjures up fond pictures of
your reunited world,
Where conscience will be lost in rapture and
duty merged in love.

The Seers

LIKE mountain peaks, the morning tints
with gold
The loftiest brows in every land.

Look in those eyes of promise, and behold
The day at hand.

In the Saddle

MOUNTED on Ahmar, flying at a mad
run over the desert,—
The infinite deep blue sea on the left bound-
ing the infinite expanse of ruddy grey
sand, and from it the strong north wind
blowing under the infinite pale blue sky.
It is a trinity of infinities, and we feel infinite
too, my stallion and I.
His body heaves and falls between my legs
like a great bellows that I am working
and squeezing, and his girth creaks and
creaks.

I wave my whip in the air,—he sees it from the corner of his red off-eye, but it has no effect on him, for he is always straining every nerve with outstretched sweating neck and wild mane.

I scarcely seem to move in the saddle.

How we enjoy it ! I sing aloud in glee.

Before we left the palm-groves,—the tall bending palms and the short palms buried up to their necks in the sand,—I could hardly hold him, and he would bolt while we were still dangerously entangled among the trunks.

At the well on the edge of the desert the Arab girls saw us coming, and they caught up their water-jars and scurried away, as I laughed at them and shouted, “ Riglak, ya bint ! ”

Now we see nothing human except the white sunlit minaret by the sea.

How we enjoy it !

Alexander rode here, and Cæsar, and Napoleon. Here Augustus and Antony fought for the world. Nelson drove France from the seas off the shore over there.

But all that is trivial ; the one important fact is that here we are, man and mount, merged and lost in the wind.

Heaven must be something like this,—and so must hell,—

And between the two there is nothing quite worth while.

On the Suez Canal

A STARRY night on the Suez Canal !
I am standing on the forward deck of
a tramp steamer, talking with the voluble
young French employee of the canal com-
pany who manages the searchlight.

I am the only passenger on board, and all the
ship's officers and crew, not on duty, are
at supper.

We two are in the shadow behind the great box
which belches forth radiance before us.

The bowsprit and white rail and tarred ropes
stand out with unnatural distinctness in
the glare.

Beyond them the widening streak of brilliance
silvers the everlasting desert, threaded by
the straight black waterway.

We steam slowly, ponderously southward, and
our yawning monster of light devours ever
new stretches of sand, and casts the
remnants behind him in the dark.

Now he unearths a miniature Bedouin en-
campment on the right—two tents and as
many camels.

One of the beasts, tethered, browses on tufts
of desert herbage like a live pyramid.

The other sleeps recumbent in the sand like a
pyramid fallen in ruins.

The lord of the tents comes out into the night
to look at us, and his outline has all the
dignity of an Abraham or a Moses.

“How strange it is,” I say dreamily to my

companion, "how strange it is to think that across this very wilderness, looking just as it does to-night, the children of Israel once journeyed!"

"Yes," said he, "and yon Arab is nearer to Moses than we are to him."

"Ah, I am not so sure of that," I say to myself, while he busies himself with his wires.

Are we really so unlike Moses, the man who with his mysterious searchlight, his pillar of fire by night, led forth into the desert to find the Promised Land?

(He had his pillar of cloud by day too, just such a one as our funnel poured out into the sunlight this afternoon.)

Would he acknowledge any kinship to himself, except in externals, in the changeless contented Bedouin?

What better representative of our modern world could there be than this steamer of ours, traversing the waste of the ages with its metallic tread, carrying its stokers and feasters in its belly, with only my friend and me visible beneath the sky to do duty as the poet and reformer?

There they are, ever at the prow with their electric light, searching the same desert for the same elusive Promised Land, and ready to signal back on the very clouds of heaven to the loitering hosts in their wake such discoveries as may reward their vigils.

Ah, it is often chilly, hungry work, and now and again they would fain go below and sup with the rest, or even help to shovel coal into the glowing furnace.

They ask with Moses : " Who are we that we should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt ? "

They would gladly encamp in idleness forever with the eternal Arab under the eternal stars.

But the God of Moses is still in the desert, and the cry of his children still comes to him, and still he chooses his unwilling servants to renew the endless journey to the land of milk and honey, forever receding before their searchlight in the distance.

Christmas

ON the first of the lengthening days,
When the years' early morn
Gives the first summer pledge with its rays,
He is born.

Light has conquered the Dark. Did we fear
As the days shrank and paled
In the trough of the night of the year,
Light had failed ?

And the night's irresistible powers,—
As the light ebbed away,—
How they swallowed the minutes and hours,
Day by day !

To the depths of the valley of gloom
Had the sun to descend.
But to-day, lo ! the cycle of doom
Has an end !

For the promise of summer reflects
On the brows of the sky
All the glory creation expects
By and bye.

Let the winter be cruel and grey !
We care little who know
That our Christmas hails Easter to-day
O'er the snow :

And that Easter brings summer and heat
And the sunlight of love,
And the kingdom of heaven complete
From above.

Christmas Day with its greetings and song
And its brotherly cheer
Is the earnest of days which ere long
Will be here.

And the Child whom the manger reveals
'Twixt the sheep and the kine
Is the earnest of Manhood that feels
The Divine.

Judge Not

I

WHY do I punish ?

I may say that I do it to balance the misdeed, to reform the misdoer, or to improve the world.

I may say all this,—but why do I punish ?

I punish because I crave punishment as I crave tobacco or whiskey.

When I learn to crave something better, I shall cease to punish.

II

I judge you ?

Who made me to be a judge over you ?

What do I know about you ?

What do I know about myself ?

I sometimes think that I condemn myself on inadequate evidence.

Is not the fact of being born a man or a woman an all-sufficient extenuating circumstance ?

III

✓ Do not think that I am judging you ; I am judging myself.

I know you only as a reflection of myself.

All your worst faults are flourishing in my soul, and it is only there that I can know them and grapple with them.

I am merely using you as a lay-figure to represent myself.

I cannot effectually invade your country.
I can only invite you to inaugurate a campaign
there on your own account.

IV

My punishment is what I am.
Chains, prisons, solitary cells, are but faint
shadows of it.
And I am also my own reward ;
For a strain of heaven too has somehow worked
itself into my substance.
I am the product of my own good and evil.
✓ Why should I judge and punish you, when we
must all judge and punish ourselves ? ✓

Town Pictures

I

I HAVE travelled many ways to find the real
centre of things human, the point to
which mankind converges and from
which it depends.
Here on Manhattan Island I think of it as
lying somewhere to the east in Europe,
but I have looked for it there in vain.
I could not put my hand on it in London or
Paris or Rome or Stamboul.
These cities were too far north or south or east
or west, and yet in passing from one to
the other I never felt myself at the true

centre of gravity in the intermediate fields and villages.

How much in earnest we all seem to be on the express train !

Surely we are a people with an object in life, if any there be.

We pity the poor town and country folk whom we see hopelessly adrift along the way as we rush to the great capital.

Now we are approaching the terminus.

There is bustle and confusion as we don our overcoats and gather shawlstraps and hat-boxes.

Then the train stops short, and we sally forth in every direction ;—and that is all !

There is nothing but aimlessness and restlessness in the metropolis, and we cannot thus extricate ourselves from the provinces.

And it is really so easy, no matter what out-of-the-way corner you inhabit.

You have but one discovery to make.

Learn that your back door opens on eternity, and there you are in the very centre of things.

The man who has eternity in his garden need not worry about the street on which his house fronts. ✓

II

Here I am in the station lunchroom, standing at the counter and eating what supper I may while our locomotive is drinking at the pump.

I have my eye on the thickset, greybearded conductor perched on a stool opposite me, for I know that I am safe so long as he does not move.

In his blue cloth and brass buttons, and with the carnation in his buttonhole, he is as dignified as an admiral, and far more useful.

He is talking with the girl who waits on him, but there is a quiet reserve and sense of strength beneath the surface which show that he feels the panting of his iron charge outside.

He and the girl are on an easy footing, as befit co-operators in the great work of transportation.

I like the pride and comradeship of these railway people.

Even the women who were washing car-windows at the Grand Central Station this afternoon seemed conscious of a joint interest in the whole line and of the fact that these were no common panes of glass.

The newsboy on the way up stalked through the train as if it was his quarterdeck, and he was acknowledged by the conductor and brakemen as a man of consideration.

Their looks seemed to say, We are members one of another.

A whistle sounds from the north. "There's 'Number Three,'" whispers to her neighbour the aproned damsel who presides over my repast—and she quietly glides to the door.

I follow her, fearing unreasonably that my portmanteau may somehow go off without me.

I am just in time to see the dazzling headlight of the Western Express burst forth from the cutting with a thundering roar like a mad monster in a nightmare.

The bell on the engine rings out deafeningly, the platform fairly shakes, and the rush of wind almost carries away my hat.

There is a glimpse of the glowing faces of the engineer and the fireman at their volcanic hearth.

The heavy mail cars and then the unwieldy sleepers, giving gleams of electric light and upholstery, plunge by us into the darkness.

On the last platform I see a trainman waving his handkerchief at me above the blood-shot bull's eye lamp in the rear.

But no, it is for the girl, whom I had well nigh forgotten.

She waves her napkin and looks smiling after the apparition until it is swallowed up in the night like a stone in a black pool.

Now she is again in her place at the counter.

In a half minute she has contributed her share of sentiment to "Number Three" and to the great iron system of which it forms a part.

She has helped knit together the numerous band of the comrades of the road.

What would not Wagner have given could he have chained this dragon, "Number Three," with its rush and roar and romance to his art.

It is our turn now to dash along, ponderous and rumbling, to the north.

The conductor has descended from his pinnacle and I follow him out to the train.

I am proud to be borne on my way by these railway workers.

As I sit in my seat, looking out at the shadows flying by, I wonder why we cannot run our world as they do theirs.

We only need the same *esprit de corps*, which, when exalted and extended, we call religion.

Is our orbit less worthy of it than the steel rails of the Central Line ?

III

Is there anything on earth more forbidding than a Court House ?

Is there a more hopeless sight than a criminal court in session ?

Come up the dirty, clammy steps with me.

Ten thousand sorrows have stained the walls and floor, and the air is heavy with the sighs of a century.

Why is it that men's laws when they assert themselves make all things hideous ?

We push through the green-baize doors between the policemen who stand on guard.

The attendant opens the gate in the railing and we sit down among the members of the bar.

The prisoners are huddled together in a pen in the corner.

We can only see them as they are brought out handcuffed one by one to plead.

Some—a very few—have ill-shapen heads from which little good can be expected.

They need the moulding influence of mothers and sisters and wives, or of guardians who may tenderly fill their places.

We, in our wisdom, lock them up rather for years, and then turn them loose again, far more dangerous and miserable than before.

The other prisoners are for the most part just like you and me.

Somehow I like their looks much better than those of their gaolers and prosecutors.

✓ All that our punishing does for them is to de-grade them.

It does not, as it should, expiate and annul their crime.

On the contrary, we despise them, not for their faults, but for the penalty we inflict. ✓

We reserve our deepest contempt, not for the thief, but for the gaol-bird,—not for the contaminated soul, but for the striped clothes we put on the body.

The court-officers are now hustling the wretched men and women one after another up to the bar as their names are called.

They pass the limp human merchandise along like machines.

The monotonous clerk reads off the indictments like a machine.

The bored, impassive judge presides over it all like a machine.

For none of them are these hunted, frightened creatures real human beings.

There is no more thought of brotherhood in the Court than there is in the wheels and cogs of a factory.

It is a dead, relentless mill.

The grindstones are made of human flesh unnaturally petrified, and it is against nature that they are grinding human flesh between them.

The judge and the lawyers and deputies and policemen are nothing but bolts and rivets and bars, — but iron and flint.

They are no longer men ; they have abdicated their humanity and are now merely so much machinery.

How sure His Honour is as he sits there that he will enter into the kingdom of heaven before these vulgar transgressors !

I am not so sure.

The greatest crime a man can commit is to make a machine of himself.

A machine is lower than a brute, and to sink to that level is worse than robbery or murder.

It is worse because it is less human.

I think I comprehend now why I had such an aversion for the hard faces of these legal people.

A trial has begun at last.

They are swearing a detective as witness.

Every one knows that his trade and character are much lower than the prisoner's at the bar, but here he is recognised as a brother-administrator of justice and is esteemed accordingly.

A police-officer follows him and kisses the greasy Bible.

They are all aware that a policeman will swear to anything, though a man hang for it, and yet here his word passes for gospel truth.

It is the business of mills to grind and the faces of the poor have always been ground ; shall we blame the indiscriminating grind-stones ?

In France they hang up a picture of Christ-on-the-Cross over the bench in every courtroom.

That murder was the deed of a court of law,—of two courts in fact.

What a gallery we could make of the sad work of similar mills of justice !

There I seem to see hanging on the dingy wall the faces of Socrates and Paul, of Savonarola and More, of Huss and Galileo, of Barneveldt and Sidney and John Brown.

If the judge could see and understand them, he would feel less virtuous and superior.

How many judges are only remembered now
on account of the felons whom they despised !

Ah, your Honour does not know what dirty
work this is at its best !

You are the partner of the informer and executioner and not a whit more respectable
than they are.

Let us leave the fetid, accursed place.

At the door a thin, timid young woman, weary
and wan, a black shawl thrown over her
head, is asking a policeman where she can
find her husband.

She speaks English badly and holds up a soiled
piece of crumpled paper which bears his
name.

He has been arrested, she says, and all day
long she has sought him in vain, wandering
from court to court.

The man does not half listen to her.

How should a machine hear ?

He brushes her away.

She turns to another and another, but not one
of them will give her his attention.

They are all under the spell of machine-made
justice which knows neither mercy nor
humanity.

Cry on, poor child, in the foul dark corner of
the corridor under the feeble gas-jet.

If only you could get at the prisoners in the
pen and ask them your question, they
might perhaps hear you, and answer you,
and take some interest in you, for they are

only unhappy human sinners and have
not yet been transformed into machines.
But here there is no hope for you.
Cry on, poor child !

IV

I know you are not telling the truth.
You have no starving wife and children, and
you do not want a ticket to Boston to
enable you to find work.
What you wish for is another glass of whiskey.
You are not only lying but lying most unskill-
fully.
And yet I believe in you, though I do not believe
you.
If I did not believe in you, I should lose faith
in the Universe.
Underneath all this falsehood there is some-
thing firm and true that I will swear by.
It is well that I should assure you of it, for you
may not know it.
Here is your dollar ; spend it as you will ; but
remember that there is one who trusts you.

V

Riding down the Bowery on an electric car, I
see on the right a drayman, heavy, set in
his ways, trying perversely to drive across
the street with his load before we reach
him.

Our motor-man sees him too, and might let him pass by yielding his rights a little, but he only pushes on the faster.

The drayman is forced to pull his team hastily to one side, and the car strikes the nose of the inoffensive near horse.

The driver scowls and mutters low, ineffectual curses.

The motor-man looks back with a sneer of exultation.

All hell has been loose in the Bowery this morning.

VI

When I skim over the literary journals one after another in the reading-room,

How they cloy and pall upon me, like a diet of sweets !

Words, words, words !—

The sickening idea of mere unrelated literature,—

The disgustingness of words as the main end of life,—

As if words should be aught but the foot-notes of life,—

The notes in small letters and the life itself writ out in large,—

Such are the thoughts that I think in the reading-room,

While I hear the heavy carts thunder along towards Broadway, shaking the very walls of the building.

VII

The bustling, noisy street, in the foreground—
 drays coming and going, electric cars
 flying by and ringing their warning bell ;
Foot-passengers hastening their steps, each
 intent on his own errand ;

Round the corner you see the great primary
 school.

The two low doors, one at each end of the
 façade, are opening, and now two streams
 begin to flow out as from a tapped reservoir.

One stream is of frolicking, shouting small boys,
 the other of chattering little girls.

Each of the twin streams splits in two, and the
 two halves which flow our way mingle
 their waters.

Boys and girls, red hoods and torn brown caps,
 bags of books and lunch boxes ; on they
 come, fearlessly, to the crossing.

Then on the curb for a moment they gather as
 behind an invisible dam.

Will they dare to rush in between the cars and
 carts and carriages ?

Can they possibly cross without accident ?

Ah, they know better than we do.

From the other side of the way their daily
 friend advances to meet them, the gigantic,
 broad-girthed policeman.

He holds out both hands and they flock around
 him.

Soon he has a tiny maiden swinging in the air
 on each arm.

A half-dozen boys are hanging on to his ample coat-tails.

There are children before him and behind him and between his legs, so that he has to pick his way.

He lifts his hand, and as before a new Moses a pathway opens across the crowded thoroughfare, the flood of traffic banked up on either side.

Confidently relying on this towering pillar of protection, the youngsters pass over and scamper down the street until the last little damsel disappears waving her hand back at their champion.

✓ Oh, if uniforms and brass buttons always stood for that ! ✓

VIII

The Hungarian band is in full swing.

The swarthy little Gypsy leader, with his back to the three fiddlers and zither-player, is swaying to and fro over his violin, oblivious of everything but his half-improvised, unmeasured outbursts of minor harmonies.

Round the tables sit comfortable listeners—men, women and children—and before each is a foaming mug of amber beer.

An occasional sandwich of rye bread and Swiss cheese with plentiful mustard breaks the monotony.

The music stops and there is much clapping of hands, and now a low hum of conversation sets in.

There is a general sense of satisfaction and good humour and leisure.

The genial red-faced host at the bar beams on us like a veritable Gambrinus.

Even my blond, fat waiter looks as if he liked to stand there dreaming, with a napkin over the worn sleeves of his black alpaca jacket.

On the walls are brilliant pictures of knights and maidens let into the heavy wood work, with mottoes from German ballads.

Can this be the infernal realm of King Alcohol of which I have heard so much ?

Yesterday I was in the country of his enemy, the dairy lunch-room.

Framed Scripture texts were hung up here and there above my head, interspersed with gentle reminders to "Beware of pick-pockets."

The pale young clerk who sat opposite to me at the narrow varnished table, ate his pork and beans and buck-wheat cakes for dinner in just seven minutes by the clock, and left me before I had quite assimilated the fact of his arrival.

All the rest were too busy in doing likewise to notice him.

No one spoke to his neighbour and the only dissipation was the universal reading of the cheapest evening papers.

The spare, overworked damsels of uncertain age who waited on us, made my heart ache for their strident weariness.

I was hardly surprised that the habitués made such haste to get away.

Is it any wonder that King Alcohol, with all his crimes on his head, should triumph over King Temperance, relying solely on his prim, dyspeptic, negative virtues ?

I believe joviality has its place in the Kingdom of Heaven.

I believe the angels are jovial.

We ought to be jovial without beer, but, failing that, a bastard beer joviality is better than nothing.

IX

It is an August evening in a free roof-garden built for the people on a pier over the river.

I am in a bad humour to-night, and I come here to cure myself.

Crowds are sitting in rows on benches on each side of the stand where the brass band is playing, and round them and up and down the long deck from one end to the other passes a continuous stream of promenaders under the electric lights.

I join the shabby procession, but the vulgar flirting of those shrill shop-girls with the rough young men behind them is quite indecent, and offends me sadly.

I stop at the end of the pier, and look out at the dark river with its lights, white, red and green.

It would be altogether beautiful, if it were not for the shriek of the ferry whistles in the

next slip, and the suggestion of sewage in the south breeze.

But this will not do ; I have not come here to complain, but to take my regular cure.

I sit down on the corner of a bench, not too near the musicians.

And now I begin to love.

At first it is an effort, and I undertake only the children, for they are the easiest.

There is a baby yonder, jumping on its mother's arm in time with the trumpets, and another tiny dot dancing across the floor holding her pink skirts out with her hands.

Now I am loving them hard, like a new-kindled coal fire with the blower on, and I can almost hear my heart roar.

I have soon reached the point of loving all the children (and how many there are), even the most perverse, and gradually the mothers too move into my focus.

The old people come next. How I love that respectable old Irishwoman there with her cap and red shawl, watching her grandchild (or is it her great-grandchild ?)—and the sturdy German grandsire asleep bolt upright in his carefully brushed black coat ! I could hug them both, and I do not find it easy to keep my hands off them.

But now my love is boiling over, and becoming indiscriminate.

I can put it to any test and try it on any one ; it is a conflagration that would outstrip any fire-extinguisher.

I turn my heart loose on the shabby procession,
and now I pronounce it worthy of a place
on the frieze of the Parthenon.

I love the pale tailor in his dirty shirt-sleeves,
with his sickly boy in his arms.

I love the black hands of the machinist, and I
am glad that he has not washed them too
thoroughly.

I love the thin, grey-haired old maid with
spectacles (how surprised she would be if
she knew it !) and the young rowdies who
are waltzing together.

Here come the same vulgar youths and maidens
who shocked me an hour ago, quite as
vulgar as ever, and yet now I love them
till I see nothing that is not divine in them.

Love covers a multitude of sins—indeed it
does !

But the band is playing “ Home, Sweet Home,”
and the multitude has already half dis-
appeared.

It is time for me to close the draughts and let
the fire go down.

My love-cure has worked its wonted miracle,
and blues and ill humour have gone.

As a patent-medicine I should like to sing its
praises and advertise its virtues, until
whole cities should take it for their muni-
cipal ailments, and statesmen prescribe it
to their several nations.

Who says there is no panacea ?

Love is the great panacea !

Country Pictures

I

TRAMPING down the broad green valley,
over the ribs of the mountains,—
Following the good old dusty road as it winds,
and catching glimpses of the distant creek
there below,—

Breathing it all in,—the summer air, the
harvest view, the noise of crickets,
with all our senses confused in one blithe
ecstasy,—

Rejoicing in the strength of our legs and walking
faster now near sun-down than we did in
the early morning,—

We are free,—free !

We carry no burden to speak of,—we stop
where we like,—we are chained down by no
property or respectability—yet we own all
that we see and feel compassion for the
people we pass.

I spy the spire of a village, three miles below
us, at the turn in the valley.

We halt and examine our map ; yes, there we
shall sleep, unless we change our minds
before we get there.

Oh, to live ever like this, with our shirt-sleeves
rolled back well above the elbows and our
arms browning like the best of meer-
chaum,—

Never to resort again to our prisons,—to be forever on our own feet, like yon hawk on its own wings!

✓ Men made carriages and bicycles and motor-cars and ambulances and hearses, but God made legs! ✓

II

They are taking the apple-orchard by assault. The storming-party are attacking the old tree in the corner and the butts of their ladders, propped up against it, protrude beneath the foliage.

There is a rustling of leaves, a noise of the soft dropping of fruit into baskets, and of the low talk of hidden men.

Now and then the sun shines on the apparition of an eager hand or on a bit of checkered clothing.

The red globes (redder on the south side of the tree) have half disappeared, and the tree is joining the rest of the row behind it in sombre mourning verdure.

Little blotches of Paris-green from last April's spraying still spot the leaves.

A cedar-waxwing, afraid to approach her nest, chirps in the nearest tree.

Over there they empty the baskets on a sail-cloth stretched on the ground in the shade, and one of the men, seated on it, sorts them into piles, jerking the bad ones away behind him.

Two others are filling a clean new barrel, and the basketfuls fall in with a hollow musical rumble.

They screw down the top with a hand-press, squeezing the apples against each other, and they drive in the nails around with a sharp click.

A waggon will come to-night and draw the barrels away to the river, and they will go down to the harbour in a freight-boat, and then they will board a great steamer and set sail to cross the Atlantic on the morrow.

They are all going to England, and in another fortnight their ruddy tinge will be tinting fresh English cheeks.

I stand under a tree and pick the fruit over my head, occasionally slipping as I tread on the windfalls in the grass, destined later for the cider-barrel.

There is a delicious aroma of apples in the air.

A dozen ripe fruit hang in a row above me from a slender switch of a branch bent nearly double by their weight, and it rises out of my reach as I pluck them one by one.

There is something almost sensuous in the feel of three big apples on one twig as I grasp them in one hand and twist them off with a turn of the wrist.

A grasshopper perched on an apple lying on the ground seems to be watching me at my work.

I would like to pack the atmosphere of the whole

cheerful scene away in the barrels and send it over sea too, and with it heaping basketfuls of good will.

How I wish that they could taste the added flavour !

But wait ! In my world, when I have created it, all other fruit will taste sour, and my apples will drink in friendliness to as good purpose as they now absorb the sunshine.

III

Sleighing swiftly westward into the late sunset.—

The deep snow lies white over all, hill and plain and distant Catskills.

The broad river is a solid shimmer of white, sown with diamonds.

The stone wall bounding the road on the left is hidden in snowdrifts.

The wall on the right is topped and corniced with new-born marble.

The branches of the black hemlocks are bending heavy laden with whiteness.

Before my cutter the track extends, two deep ruts with a silvery pink streak at the bottom of each, polished by burnished runners and leading up to the western sky.

A layer of crimson rests upon the sweep of snowy horizon ahead, tinting the rolling snowfields with rosy shades.

L. M. G.

My horse, Charley, lets himself out at a full trot along one of the deep ruts (for the shafts are so hung that he may follow the one on the left), and the soft snow between the runners just grazes the bottom of the sleigh.

He is so warm under his long furry hair that a cloud of steam rises from his back and sides.

His girdle of jubilant bells rings out and gives voice to his own delight in his speed and the crisp fresh air.

Oh, the exhilaration of it !

What poet inventor discovered the eternal affinity of snow and sleigh-bells ?

And I, too, am warm under my furs and wraps, a clumsy oasis of heat in the midst of arctic cold.

Only my fingers ache a little now and again, and I must hold the reins in my right hand for a time and thrust my left in its thick woollen glove under the lap robes and work my fingers until they are warm again.

My upper lip is stiff with its frosted moustache and my ears tingle just enough to make me appreciate my glowing body.

I love the frozen, swift white road, free from dust and mud and motor cars.

I love the beautiful white cold earth and the beautiful pink, cold sky.

Not a breath of wind disturbs the intensity of their stillness.

(There is no noise in the sleigh-bells, for theirs is only the spirit of tone.)

I would not be banished for all the year to the noisy, buzzy summerland and miss for ever this pure hushed zone of crystal and silver.

I love to be a coal of fire in the midst of the polar frost.

It is warm under the snow, too.

Think of the myriads of living things, of chipmunks and woodchucks, of toads and insects, and creatures that creep and fly, snuggling and all tucked in under the kindly coverlet.

They sleep through the winter night—with the white counterpane on top and the warm, green blanket underneath.

There are big rough bears dreaming over there, too, on the mountains.

Think of the millions of seeds and eggs ready to burst forth when the sun lifts their bed-clothes and gives them a tepid bath in the year's new morning.

The earth is as warm as I am under its wraps, and, like me, only here and there in its moustache and fingers does it feel the hurt of the keen, clear air.

We are brothers—swift, warm brothers—the earth and Charley and I—carrying our live coals of joy through frigid space, with only pain enough to accentuate the pleasure.

And the sleigh-bells—the sleigh-balls—are our music of the spheres.

'The Living Universe

I

WHAT are you, stars of night, revolving,
journeying, pulsing ever—
What are you, planets, visible and invisible, of
this and other systems—
What but life magnified—the life of my frame
and tissue infinitely, stupendously magni-
fied ?
Throw away your microscopes, O naturalists !
your naked eye is as good as any magni-
fying glass.
Will you ever see clearer into germ or proto-
plasm than you see into the living heavens
with their shining molecules ?

II

I know the secret of the universe.
Now at last I have found out what ails it.
The universe is in love.
It is giving itself a prodigious reckless hug.
It hugs too hard, but it loves too much to give
any heed to protests.
Its love is the source of all pleasure and the
source of all pain.
It loves the lively birds and beasts and the
strenuous men who feed on them and the

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beautiful microbes and tumours that feed on the men, and most of all it loves the tremor and friction and oppugnance between its loves, and sets its teeth to the shock and thrill of them.

There is a bite in its burning kiss that gives vent to love's unbearable intensity.

The universe needs safety valves, and we are its safety valves.

If it were not for its outlet through us and our agonies, it would go mad or explode.

Yes, there is an agony in love and the universe is in love.

Gravitation is love and the attraction of atoms for each other is love.

The vibrant light is love, and the tingling of heat is love.

The planets, straining in their orbits, trace "love" on the face of the heavens.

The perplexed waves, drawn now skyward, now earthward, write "love" all over the sea.

Love sucks the rivers to their sources and the sap to the tips of the trees.

Love clasps star to star and molecule to molecule.

There is nothing but love.

All life is nothing but hugging, and the universe is one long excruciating embrace !

Love

I

WHEN I thought you were perfect and far above our slips and trips, it was an effort to love you.

But now that you have confessed your fault, (so like my own fault that I have never confessed) I am drawn irresistibly to you.

How can they love in heaven where there are no common weaknesses to bind them together?

II

What do you love most in your sweetheart,—that which she shares with all others, or the inexplicable thing which differentiates her from them all?

When the deep underlying humanity is as fascinating to us as the shallow variations, what will then become of all our billing and cooing and pairing?

III

Do you love each other only?

It will soon burn out,—that love.

One love will devour the other.

Try loving the world together, and turn your bonfire of shavings into a blast-furnace with all the universe for fuel.

IV

There is something beyond brotherhood.
Brotherhood is very good in its way, but court-
ing and wedlock are better.
I had rather woo the world than be brother to
it.
I want my life to be one long love-story.

V

There is a higher love than ours at its best.
The love which we know has too much alloy in
it of pity and compassion.
I want no one to pity me, and, by the Golden
Rule, I must not indulge too deeply in the
luxury of pitying others.
I want my mother to keep out of my eyes.
I do not wish my voice to quaver, nor do I
willingly lose control of my countenance.
The "Ewig-Weibliche" is better than self-
seeking and barbarism, no doubt, but we
shall find something still higher beyond it.
There is a love that can give and take on equal
terms without a tremor of the under-lip,
— which stands as firm on its base as
yonder Catskills, — which flows as broad
and steady as the Hudson at their feet.
Let us press forward to that supreme love.

VI

What is this talk of egoism and altruism, as if
they were at enmity with each other, and

not rather the twin sides of character,
growing symmetrically and with even
balance ?

The infinite love of Jesus made him conscious
that he was the Son of God, and that he
and the Father were one.

Could his egoism have gone beyond this in its
effort to overtake his altruism ?

Nay, love the Lord thy God,—in thyself,—the
deepest egoism ;

Love thy neighbour,—and the Lord thy God
in him,—the widest altruism ;

Love God in all things, for this is the one
commandment.

God's Window

GOD has a house that's wide and tall,
And I'm a window in his wall.
How clear and pure I ought to be
If God must view his world through me !

My Soul

I

“**W**HAT must I do to be saved ? ”
O narrow, selfish, trivial question !
Implying no mere selfishness of a minute or
hour or day, but a whole eternity of in-
growing soul.

Is my salvation a matter of such importance ?
Those only are saved who do not care whether
they are saved or not.

The soul can indeed save itself, but only by
forgetting itself, and jumping overboard
out of itself.

II

I found my soul lying neglected, and I picked
it up and wondered what the strange
mechanism was for.

I went to school to learn what use to make of
my soul.

They taught me to think with it, but it strained
and creaked and nearly gave way under
the ordeal.

They showed me how to amuse myself with it,
but it speedily got out of order and refused
to work.

Then they trained me to hate with my soul, but
it broke down utterly and nearly fell to
pieces.

I came back from school disgusted with my
soul and my teachers.

It was long after (alone, lying on my bed in the
night watches) that it flashed upon me
what my soul was for.

Why did none of them tell me that my soul
was a loving machine ?

III

Are there extinct suns revolving dark and in-
visible through space, waiting for their
fires to rekindle ?

Such I feel myself to be as I follow my dim
orbit.

Oh, to be a sun, a burning shining sun, with
healing in its beams,

Radiating all that is best in it so that all within
its circle is made clean and wholesome and
warm !

I am a dynamo with the current turned off.

When will they turn it on ?

IV

Living at low pressure,—

Scarcely enough steam up to keep in motion at
all,—

Going through the forms of conviction and enthusiasm on the memories of full, ecstatic hours warmed over,—

I wait despondently for the moment of complete collapse.

But no. The power rises ; the pressure redoubles ; the heat kindles ; the heart quickens.

I shall once more really live, and there are still full ecstatic hours in store.

V

I can hardly keep from smiling indecorously this sunshiny morning as I walk along Broadway, I am on such good terms with everybody ;

They are all such good fellows, I am sure they are.

I wish I could think of some one who had served me a bad turn, so that I might play him a good one in revenge.

✓ What a luxury forgiveness is !

I am in serious danger of loving my enemies more than my friends to-day,—

I am under such obligations to them for bringing out all that is most delicious in me. ✓

The sun is shining this morning inside and out.

VI

✓ You who would convince me of my immortality
by means of mysterious rappings in dark-
ened rooms and magic slates and moving
tables,

How hopelessly beside the mark are all your
efforts !

I have Moses and the prophets, David and
Isaiah, Paul and John, Tolstoy and Whit-
man, and if I hear not them, neither shall
I be persuaded though one rose from the
dead. ✓

The man who is deaf to the prophets has failed
to become conscious of his own immortal
self, and the self that he cherishes shall
die, all the slates and tables to the con-
trary notwithstanding.

VII

I stand wistfully at the door.

I want to go in but the price of admission is too
high for me.

I say that the door is shut,—that there is no
room for me within,—that others are
keeping me out,—that it would be selfish
to go in alone,—but I know it is all untrue.

What I mean is that the price is too high.

And what is the price ?

The price is simply to go in,—to take the one
short, necessary step across the threshold.

VIII

Prayer is not an asking for things,
Nor a solemn repetition of good words,
Nor a Hindoo wheel turning in the wind.
Prayer is a vital change.
It is the deepening of the soul.
It is the shifting inward of my centre of gravity
toward the great Source of life.
This is the only prayer.
And there is but one answer to prayer, and
that is the influx of the waters of life
welling up within me.

IX

No far-away despot,
No worn tradition,
No shadowy background for Nature's give and
take,
No algebraic insoluble X, nor mark devised to
stand for an unknowable infinity,
No arbitrary postulate or working theory,
No guess in the dark,—
My God is none of these things.
Nay, God is an experience of the soul.

X

Stop rummaging in the past for musty causes,
O scientist!

Seek not the living among the dead.
Life *is*,—not *was*,—and must ever continue to
be.
How can the vanished columns of ages ago
sustain our present temples?
Then search, not for dead causes, but for the
Living God.

XI

At the source of my being,—
At the point where life wells up within me,—
There my soul opens out into a new and wider
plane,—
There I am in touch at all points with all
things,—
There I feel dim suggestions of another di-
mension,—hints of the unfolding of new
celestial vistas from every commonplace,
familiar spot of earth.

XII

But I seldom venture into the spiritual storm-
centre which is myself,—
That vortex of the contending east and west
winds of truth ;—
I fear the strain upon my outer self too much.
I live for the most part on the outskirts with
back turned and fingers in ears, gazing at
the rigid world outside.

And yet I know, and am content to know that
sooner or later I shall be drawn in and
through and up, beyond the east wind and
the west wind, and the rush and roar of
opposites, and the duel of good and evil,
to the balance and poise which are even to
a greater degree myself.

XIII

O my heart's flood, run high !
Thou round bright magnet of the midnight
skies, bend down and lift the waters till I
overflow and float, buoyed up in my own
liquid atmosphere, while love and truth
come rushing in from the eternal sea to fill
the void.
To be filled, to run over, to float,—what is there
else to live for ?
O my heart's tide, run high !

XIV

Madness, divine madness !
Who ever lived a life worth living without
madness ?
Who ever saw the ineffable dream and came
back completely sane ?
There is a comprehensive sanity above the
madness, but that is beyond human reach.
The only other sanity is that which men share
with other animals and trees.

We cannot rest in that.
Onward, upward, to the other,—through the
madness !

XV

As I lie in my bed at night,
I go forth and hover over the many-mansioned
city.
I can see into all its multitudinous homes, and
I give of myself with both hands to the
eager, expectant inmates.
Hunggrily they lift their arms toward me and
we are drawn to each other.
But I am also drawn upward by an attraction
from above ; I do not descend,—I rise,
and they rise with me.
Like an aeronaut throwing off ballast, I go up,
up.
Then, when I should attain the acme of all, I
am left in confusion.
There is light there,—and peace,—and intense
action,—I feel it,—but it all baffles me,—
baffles me again and again,
As I lie in my bed.

XVI

Poised in the buoyant atmosphere of universal
love, all things may fall away from my
soul, and yet leave it still secure, self-centred
in the firmament.

I float in a sea of love.
Can there be love without a Lover, I wonder.
Is love the mere act of lovers, or are lovers
 episodes and eddies in the ocean of love ?
Which comes first, love or lover ?
Does personality blossom into love, or does
 love wake into personality ?
I know not, but I float in a sea of love.

XVII

In the dark,
Between the stars without and the stars within,
My soul is deftly hung and balanced.
How rarely I go out to look at the stars at
 night ?
And when I go out how seldom I lift my eyes
 to heaven !
And in the other inner dark, how there too I
 shun the constellations, and, when I am
 not actually sleeping, how I hug the
 candle-light and lamp-light instead !

XVIII

When my compass is deranged and the needle
 vacillates idly round the horizon,—
When the constellations seem hopelessly tan-
 gled and I cannot tell the Great Bear from
 the Southern Cross,—

Even then there is one sure resource,—
I can still tug at my anchor-chain and feel it
rooted in the solid earth.

XIX

My soul is a tree, a drowsy, monotonous tree,
but what care I? for the birds come and
sing in its branches.
Only the common garden birds stay long enough
for me to describe them to you, and chirp
plainly enough for me to learn their song.
But what of the scarlet birds of the woods that
alight for a moment and then in a moment
are off again?
What of the flitting shadows of song that will
not be scrutinized, while they pour forth
weird minor shivers of melody whose bass
notes vibrate into eternity?
I cannot tell you of them. You must watch
your own branches for them.
No tree is so dead but the birds will sing in its
branches.

XX

What is this within me which sometimes when
I am bent on enjoyment, peremptorily
cries out, Nay?
Is it not my best self, jealous of some other,
outer, lower mastery and anxious to
assert its sway?

What is this within me which, when I have learned the lesson, gently whispers, "Now, if you still care to, do as you wished"?

Is it not still the same hidden captain, sure now of my loyalty and trusting me far afield?

At last he knows that even in the heart of the enemy's country I shall not think of deserting.

XXI

✓ I cannot enjoy a thing freely so long as I am subject to it,—so long as I cannot do without it.

I must master it and pass beyond it before I can turn round and enjoy it.✓

If you wish to own a thing, let it go.

Hold fast to it, if you wish to be its slave.

The chess-player keeps his head well above the board.

He rises superior to it, he looks down upon it, he knows this is only a game.

Play as he does with your passions and appetites.

Move them about as pawns wherever you would have them go,

But remember that life is something other.

Then even if the game is lost, defeat will not have reached you at your point of vantage.

XXII

Who would lead a life tedious with tame successes ?

There is nothing so dull, so dispiriting as success, for it robs me of my chief treasure, the future.

It takes the relish out of life and leaves nothing behind.

It is defeat that is bracing,—

To feel that defeat was powerless to reach you,—

To lose all and exult to find yourself still intact,—

To be impregnable and eternal and independent of things and conditions,—

To possess the essence of victory in your unconquerable courage.

✓ Life is a school wherein failure is a better teacher than success.✓

XXIII

Where are the cowards who bow down to environment,—

Who think they are made of what they eat and must conform to the bed they lie in ?

I am not wax,—I am energy.

Like the whirlwind and waterspout I twist my environment into my form, whether it will or not.

What is it that transmutes electricity into auroras, and sunlight into rainbows, and

soft flakes of snow into stars, and adamant into crystals, and makes solar systems of nebulæ ?

Whatever it is, I am its cousin german.

I too have my ideals to work out and the universe is given me for raw material.✓

I am a signet and I will put my stamp upon the molten stuff before it hardens.

What allegiance do I owe to environment ? I shed environments for others as a snake sheds its skin.

The world must come my way—slowly, if it will—but still my way.

I am a vortex launched in chaos to suck it into shape.

XXIV

I want nothing, nothing, but you, O Truth !
Give yourself to me,—my arms are open wide.
Drive away the illusions that tremble at your approach.

I do not care how you may look to my distorted eyes.

After my long debauch with these phantasms
I may find you uncomely,—but you are comely,—you only are comely.

Deep down within me,—deeper than I think
or feel or dream,—even there I need you,—
there is your empty throne.

And Truth whispered, “Love,—and I will come.”

My Soul Again

HERE, where I live (thus spake my soul
To me whose hair is turning grey),
No clock doth chime the flight of time,
For we know it is Now all day.

Here, where I live (thus spake my soul
As it smiled at the white that flecked my
hair),
No milestones show the road we go,
For our Here is Everywhere.

Grow old, if you will (thus spoke my soul),
But I am as young as a new-born child.
Though your head be hoar and burden sore,
I am strong and free and wild.

So I thanked my cheery childlike soul,
And laughed to know that all was well ;
And I turned away from my head of grey
And went to my soul to dwell.

You

I

I WOULD not break your will, for, like mine,
it is a sprout of the infinite will.
I might indeed wish to transform it, but so
long as it *is* will, let it have its way.

II

✓ Express yourself.
Whatever you are, out with it !
We do not want a world of masqueraders.
Make yourself felt,—make your real self felt.
Put your private stamp upon the future.
Make the world go a bit differently from what
it would have gone if you had never been
born.
Imitate no one,—saint, sage or hero.
Be yourself, and perhaps you will find that
you are by your own birthright one of the
elect. ✓

Microcosm

I SPLIT a grain of common sand
And behold ! within it lay
The vaulted universe bespanned
By the uttermost Milky Way.

I delved in my narrow soul, and lo !
At my being's inmost core
I saw the eternal Godhead glow
And the heavenly hosts adore.

A Prayer

COME to me, woo me, Soul of the All !
Early and late,
As I labour, I wait
For thy quickening call.
Carry me off, O thou Soul of Desire,
For a moment of bliss,
To the central abyss
In thy chariot of fire !
Let me know in the long quiet years that succeed,
Looking down from above
On the gross forms of love,
What it is to be freed.

Hints

LITTLE care we for the mark
At which our winged words are aimed ;
Just aside there in the dark
Lurks the thought we never named.
So the vague magnetic pole
In the boreal skies afar
Like a disembodied soul
Haunts the obvious polar star.
Not the star at which we gaze
Thrills and joins our souls on high,
But the one whose furtive rays
Catch the corner of our eye.
Not the songs the poet sings
Set our ears and hearts a-ringing,
But unutterable things
Which he stops just short of singing.

Apologia

I

I PULLED up the flowers in my garden, for
I had learned that they were poisonous.
Yet I loved them,—purple and red and white,—
and I pulled them up with tears.
My garden was a desert and my garden was
all my life.
In the morning I went to weep again in my
garden, and I found these pansies growing
wild where my tears had fallen.

II

A motto for critics, *Be silent on your blind side !*
There are things that you reckon not of.
There are worlds that you know not.
There are forces to which you are impervious.
No one of us can see and appreciate the whole.
Let us then hold our peace in the dark.

III

We who have been there have all beheld the
same landscape.
We make use of different symbols,—we may
seem to talk contrariwise,—we may even
misunderstand and denounce each other,—

but read between the lines and you will perceive that our descriptions tally.
If we repeated each other's story by rote, like the witnesses in an Oriental law-suit, you would do well to disbelieve us ;
But note our divergencies and our enthusiasm and recognise the very ear-marks of truth.
Trace them back to their misty, radiant source, and you will apprehend the only thing worth knowing.

IV

You must listen to me for I have something to say.
You will not like my form of speech, but I know no other.
You will resent my sharp words, but I have no blunt arrows in my quiver.
You will try to shake me off and go to sleep again, but I will not be shaken off ; and even into your sleep I will inject the ferment of my dreams.

V

My ideas dangerous ?
But how is it with your own ?
Your idea for instance that it is quite right for men in uniform to slaughter each other,—an idea which slays its thousands every day ?

Your idea that it is proper for you to pocket
as much of other men's earnings as the law
allows,—an idea which fills the world with
poverty, starvation, disease and death.
And all your other silly time-worn ideas.
Is it your ideas or mine that are dangerous ?

VI

(After the Chinese.)

I played my lute to the world, but the world
danced not and went on its way unheeding.
Only here and there I saw a solitary dancer,
unnoticed of the rest, in an obscure
corner.
And I grieved at the world, for I loved my
music.
But when I looked again and discerned who
they were that danced to my lute, for-
sooth I sorrowed no longer ;
For they were the children of the new day.

Afterthought

*WHEN these new ideas of ours become
trite,—*

*When they pass glibly current from mouth to
mouth without conviction or comprehen-
sion,—*

*When the clean-cut edge of the mintage is rubbed
off and the impression half obliterated,—*

*Then there will be a shade of sadness even in
victory ;—*

*Then we shall have to pray for the advent of new
truths and new heretics.*

JUL 18 1965

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